

1 **MEDIA FILE DISTRIBUTION WITH ADAPTIVE TRANSMISSION**

2 **PROTOCOLS**

3 The present invention is a continuation-in-part of Patent Application Ser. No.
4 956,743 filed October 24, 1997 and assigned to the same assignee.

5 **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

6 **1. Field of the Invention**

7 The present invention relates to media file distribution, and, more particularly, to
8 a media file distribution system with adaptive transmission protocols in a networked
9 client/server environment which provides automated, highly compressed, user-selectable
10 media file distribution. Particular utility of the present invention is in less-than real-time
11 server-client audio/video file distribution over conventional networks; although the
12 present invention has equal utility in still image and/or high-resolution image file data
13 distribution (e.g., x-ray, MRI, etc.).

14 **2. Description of Related Art**

15 Multimedia file distribution systems, which include distribution of audio and/or
16 video information, are well known in the art. Examples include video-on-demand
17 systems and network-based real-time streaming video systems and methodologies.
18 Recent developments in high-speed network communications (e.g., ISDN, DSL, cable
19 modems, etc.) have permitted the development of real-time streaming video data
20 distribution in a client/server environment. Such systems typically employ extensive
21 video file server systems that can transmit streaming video file data directly to a user's

1 or implement some other means for ensuring reliability. Examples of common use of
2 UDP would be Domain Name Service queries, RealAudio/RealVideo, network
3 management functions, etc. Both TCP and UDP are designed for use between two
4 systems. UDP can also be used for "Broadcast". Broadcast packets are limited to a single
5 Local Area Network (LAN), and so will not cross any routers connected to that LAN.

6 Current development in the area of IP Multicasting are improving the art in
7 areas such as reliability, performance, session management, network management,
8 statistical research, router management, routing protocols, and other areas required for the
9 smooth operation of IP Multicasting on public networks (e.g., The Internet). However,
10 this art has not overcome the aforementioned problems: either the bandwidth
11 requirements for multiple client access are too large, or the transmission protocol
12 becomes unreliable. Moreover, the prior art is incapable of providing a system which can
13 analyze client transmission demands and adaptively adjust the transmission protocols to
14 most effectively accommodate a plurality of users.

15 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

16 Accordingly, the present invention solves the aforementioned drawbacks of the
17 prior art by providing a server/client media file distribution system in which the server
18 system is adapted to receive transmission requests from clients. The server also receives
19 status information from a network, and protocol information from each client. The
20 server, based upon this information, adaptively transmits a given media file stored therein

1 to one or more clients using the optimal transmission speed and/or network protocol
2 based on the network status information and protocol information.

3 In the preferred system, the present invention provides a media file distribution
4 system having a file distribution server system comprising a media file archive database
5 in communication with one or more users over a network, said media file archive
6 comprising one or more precompressed and pre-encrypted media data files, said server
7 being for receiving one or more transmission requests for a selected media file from a
8 plurality of users, the improvement comprising a file distribution system being adapted to
9 receive a plurality of said transmission requests from a plurality of users, the transmission
10 protocols of said plurality of said users and status information from said network and
11 optimally simultaneously transmit said media file to each user based on said transmission
12 protocols and said status information.

13 Additionally, the present invention provides a looping file arrangement in which a
14 plurality of clients can receive the same media file on multiple network channels, without
15 the need to provide multiple copies of the same media file for each request of that file.

16 Also, the present invention provides multiple-level encryption technology that permits the
17 server system to fully control both access and use of a given media file.

18 It will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that although the following
19 Detailed Description will proceed with reference being made to preferred embodiments
20 and methods of use, the present invention is not intended to be limited to these preferred

1 embodiments and methods of use. Rather, the present invention is of broad scope and is
2 intended to be limited as only set forth in the accompanying claims.

3 Other features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent as
4 the following Detailed Description proceeds, and upon reference to the Drawings,
5 wherein like numerals depict like parts, and wherein:

6 BREIF DESRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

7 Figure 1 is a block diagram of the media file client/server system of the present
8 invention;

9 Figure 2 is a block diagram of the preferred network arrangement of the file
10 distribution server system of the present invention;

11 Figure 3 is a block diagram of the preferred media file database system of the
12 present invention;

13 Figure 4A is a block diagram of the preferred media file distribution system of the
14 present invention;

15 Figure 4B is a flow chart diagram of the preferred media file distribution system
16 of Figure 4A;

17 [Ⓟ] Figure 5 is a block diagram of one embodiment of the media file playback system
18 of the present invention;

19 Figure 6 is a block diagram of another embodiment of the media file playback
20 system of the present invention;

1 Figure 7 is a block diagram of another embodiment of the media file playback
2 system of the present invention; and

3 Figure 8 is a block diagram of the user control interface system of the present
4 invention;

5 Figure 9A is a block diagram of convention network data transmission;

6 Figure 9B is the preferred network data transmission of the present invention; and

7 Figure 10 is a flowchart of the preferred server-client data transmission including
8 the preferred de-encryption process of the present invention.

9 It will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that although the following
10 Detailed Description will proceed with reference being made to preferred embodiments,
11 the present invention is not intended to be limited to these embodiments. For example, it
12 should be understood from the outset that although preferably the functional components
13 of the preferred embodiments of the system of the present invention are embodied as one
14 or more distributed computer program processes running on one or more conventional
15 general purpose computers (e.g., IBM-compatible, Apple MacIntosh, and/or RISC
16 microprocessor-based computers), conventional telecommunications (e.g., modem and/or
17 ISDN means), networked together by conventional network hardware and software, other
18 types of computers and network resources may be used without departing from the
19 present invention. It should also be understood that the media file playback devices
20 herein described can be embodied in various hardware forms, including: RAM/ROM
21 drives, removable and/or permanent disk drives (including, but not limited to, hard disk

1 drives, Jazz drives, and/or other removable media known in the art). Furthermore, it
2 should be appreciated from the outset that one or more of the functional components may
3 alternatively be constructed out of custom, dedicated electronic hardware and/or
4 software, without departing from the present invention. Thus, the present invention is
5 intended to cover all such alternatives, modifications, and equivalents as may be
6 included within the spirit and broad scope of the invention as defined only by the
7 hereinafter appended claims.

8 Additionally, as used herein, the term "Unicast" describes a file transfer session
9 between a single server and a single client receiver, using either TCP or UDP. The term
10 "Multicast"(or more specifically "IP Multicast") describes a file transfer session
11 between a single server and a plurality of client receivers. Because of the
12 additional clients, all Multicast sessions must be based on the UDP protocol
13 as the TCP protocol specification does not allow for more than two endpoints
14 for the connection.

15 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

16 Figure 1 is a block diagram of the media file client/server system of the present
17 invention. Shown in Figure 1 is a file distribution server 12 (which includes media file
18 database system 18 and client database 20), a client (user) system 14 (which includes a
19 media file playback system 24), connected via a network system 16. As an overview, the
20 present invention is intended to provide media file distribution in a server/client
21 environment. Media files can be any of feature films, television programs, audio files, or

1 single media file, as will be described below. In addition, the preferred system of the
 2 present invention incorporates pre-encrypted media file data stored in the media file
 3 database. The encryption/de-encryption process (digital copy protection), described more
 4 fully below, preferably includes conventional and/or proprietary encryption algorithms
 5 that require users to obtain a valid decryption key for a given media file transmitted.

6 Figure 2 depicts the preferred file distribution server arrangement of the present
 7 invention. Preferably, file distribution server installation 11 is comprised of a plurality
 8 (11A, 11B...11N) of individual installations, each being located in geographically
 9 diverse areas, on individual power grids, e.g., each being located in a separate city, or
 10 within the same city on different power grids, thereby permitting the present invention to
 11 be fault-tolerant and maintain service to users in the event one or more servers should
 12 become off-line. Preferably each file distribution server installation is comprised of a
 13 plurality of request servers (13A, 13B...13N), and a plurality of media file servers (12A,
 14 12B...12N). Each server (12 and 13) is preferably adapted with appropriate an network
 15 interface 48A ... 48N to permit one or more users access to the corresponding server over
 16 the network 16. Those skilled in the art will recognize that network interface 48A ... 48
 17 N can include of standard and/or proprietary networking hardware/software (e.g., TCP/IP
 18 networking hardware/software). Network 16 preferably includes a standard TCP/IP
 19 network (e.g., world wide web). Each server is also preferably adapted with
 20 conventional firewall hardware/software (not shown) to prevent unauthorized user access
 21 to media files stored therein. Also as shown in Figure 2, each server 12A ... 12N is

preferably in communication with the network traffic directors 50A...50N, via a heartbeat link. The heartbeat link is a status signal providing each server's respective status information, e.g., on-line/off-line, network overflow, user request data, etc. This heartbeat signal allows the network traffic director to route incoming requests to an operational server (12 and 13) able to service the request. In the event of a server failure, the network traffic director 50A...50N will detect the failure and transfer the requests being handled by that server to another server (12 or 13) able to continue processing the request. Multiple network traffic directors 50A...50N are included in the preferred embodiment to prevent the network traffic director from becoming a single point of failure. Each network traffic director 50A..50N is active and handling requests. In the event of a network traffic director failure, the remaining network traffic directors will take over the additional load automatically. Thus, network traffic director 50A ... 50N is adapted to receive network status messages, heartbeat link status messages, and individual user request messages, preferably in real-time, to permit the network traffic director to route incoming requests based on these criteria. Additionally, the traffic director monitors the transmission protocol and transmission speed of each client, and uses this information to optimally transmit a given media file to one or more clients.

As shown in figure 2, requests from users are received by the network traffic director 50A...50N, which forwards those requests to the request server 13A...13N. The response is sent back to the user by the request server. This response includes information of the client software used to contact the media file server 12A...12N. The

1 optionally compressed, watermarked, and encrypted, is stored in the media file database
2 18 associated with a collection of media file distribution servers 12.

3 Also shown on Figure 3, media files provided by advertisers are also processed
4 using compression 27B and watermarking 32B, providing the same benefits as described
5 above. Advertisements are not encrypted. The resulting advertisement archive 34 is
6 stored in the media file database 18 for later retrieval. For example, the watermark can
7 include identification information (which may include, for example, originating
8 ownership information of a given media file, etc.) and may also include copyright notice
9 information. Module 34 is provided for those suppliers of media file data who also wish
10 to include a trailing or ending advertisement, which is incorporated into a media file upon
11 transmission to a user. To that end, module 34 also includes an updatable database (not
12 shown) which contains advertisements, and also association parameters that can direct
13 certain advertisements to be incorporated with certain media files. Thus, the present
14 invention permits advertisers to provide advertisement data to the system. The
15 advertisers can choose which media file(s) their ads are to be associated with, and those
16 associations are preferably automatically affixed to the appropriate media file upon
17 transmission. The advertising data can be affixed to the media file as a trailer and/or
18 leader. Modules 28 and 30 are discussed more fully below with reference to Figure 8.

19 Also shown on Figure 3, plug-in and CODEC program source files 29 are
20 processed and compiled 31 to produce a plug-in and CODEC module archive 30 which is

1 stored in the media file database 18. As executable programs, they can be neither
2 watermarked or encrypted, as such processing would render them unusable.

3 The encryption module 46 processes the media file by generating a random key
4 which becomes the master key for the file. This master key is saved in a key database
5 (not shown). For each block, a new random frame key is generated. This key is
6 combined with the master key and the resulting key used to encrypt the payload of the
7 frame. The frame key is saved in the frame header. This information will be used later to
8 decrypt the data payload, a process described below with reference to Figure 10.

9 Figure 4A depicts the preferred embodiment of the file distribution server 12 and
10 the relationships between that server and the media file database 18. As an overview, the
11 present invention is adapted to permit multiple users access to the same media file (e.g.,
12 movie, image, etc.), thereby eliminating the need for multiple copies of a single media
13 file. Further, the preferred embodiment of the file distribution server 12 uses network
14 software and protocols to allow multiple users to access the same media file stream,
15 reducing the network bandwidth required, thus reducing the impact on the Network. In
16 the present invention, n-requests for media file content are transmitted by n-users over the
17 network and received at the appropriate server (or, rerouted to a server having the
18 selected media file), and are received by the request processor 36 running on that server.
19 Each request is for a single media file archive, advertisement archive, or media plug-in or
20 CODEC. Multiple requests can be issued by a client system, each to be processed by the
21 server and handled individually.

1 The requests are processed and passed to the protocol control module 38 for
 2 further processing in preparation for transmission. The protocol control module
 3 preferably passes the request to the multicast protocol processor 40, which attempts to
 4 establish a multicast pathway between the customer system 14 and the media file server
 5 12. If a multicast connection cannot be established, for whatever reason (e.g., lack of
 6 multicast support by the Internet Service Provider used by the customer system 14 to
 7 connect to the Internet), the protocol control module will pass the request to the unicast
 8 protocol processor 42 for establishment of a connection using the User Datagram
 9 Protocol (UDP), which is part of the standard TCP/IP network support.

10 Once the data connection is established, whether by multicast or unicast, the
 11 appropriate protocol processing module requests packets of information from the packet
 12 assembly module 44. The information necessary to assemble the packets for transmission
 13 is retrieved from the appropriate section of media file database 18. Further clarification
 14 of this process is provided below with reference to Figure 4C.

15 Referring to Figure 4b, the preferred embodiment the media archive database 18
 16 is stored on media file storage device 40. In the preferred embodiment, the media file
 17 storage device 40 includes a plurality of media file storage devices 40A...40N, consisting
 18 of one or more archive systems, for example, CD-ROM/DVD-ROM media devices, hard
 19 drive devices, or other digital media storage devices.

20 Referring to Figure 4C, the steps for processing requests is described as follows.
 21 The operational flow 50 contains the flow of processing, while Figure 4A shows the

1 efficiency, the same packets are used for transmitting to all open channels for the event,
2 whether they are multicast or unicast channels.

3 The same data stream is received by all client systems 14 actively receiving the
4 event. Each client system will have started receiving the event data at a different point in
5 data stream. The event data stream continues to be transmitted until the end of the event
6 is reached 66. At this time, the event data stream is restarted from the beginning 62.

7 Client systems continue to receive the event data until they have received the entire event
8 64. As each client completes the event, these clients systems notify the appropriate
9 protocol module of the change in status 65. The "Loop" continues until all active client
10 systems have completely received the event data. When there are no active clients
11 monitoring a channel, the event data transmission is stopped and the channel is closed.

12 Referring to Figure 4d, the receive loop is described. A packet is received 200
13 and written 210 to the local storage device on the client system 14. Each packet is
14 serialized, and if the packet received was not the packet expected 220, some data may be
15 missing. If the serial number of the packet is that of a packet previously missing, then the
16 NAK table is updated to remove the entry corresponding to the previously missing
17 packet, and any timers running on that data packet are stopped 250. If one or more
18 packets are identified as missing 220 and 230, then a NAK packet is generated. In the
19 case of a unicast connection 260, the NAK is sent immediately 280, otherwise the NAK
20 suppression timer is started (Timer "A") 270 and processing of this incoming packet
21 ends. If during the cycle of the NAK suppression timer, a NAK is received on the control

channel 300 for the same packets missed by the client system 310, then the NAK suppression timer is stopped and the NAK data timer is started 320. When either of the timers expire, the previously generated NAK packet is transmitted to the server on the multicast control channel 280. The NAK data timer is restarted 290. The NAK cycle continues until there are no outstanding missing packets.

The difference between conventional network data transmission and that provided by the present invention is shown pictorially in Figures 9A and 9B, respectively. In Figure 9A, multiple customers are seeking access to the same media file. To support simultaneous transmission in the conventional system, the media file must be duplicated at the time of transmission, one copy for each request instance (which significantly adds to the overall bandwidth requirements of the service). Alternatively, as shown in Figure 9B, users are permitted simultaneous transmission of the data file at the temporal location in which a request is received, and the media file continually "loops around" to ensure each customer receives the entire media file. In the present invention the network bandwidth requirements are significantly reduced, since only a single instance of a media file is being transmitted over the network.

Turning now to Figures 5-7, separate preferred embodiments of the media file playback system 24 are depicted. In the embodiment of Figure 5, a self-contained system (for example, a "set-top" system) 24' is provided which includes a communications interface, a user interface and associated hardware to permit a user to communicate to the

Embodiment 100

1 file distribution server 12, order a desired media file and receive and play the media file
2 using system 24'. Each of the functional components of Figure 5 are described below.

3 System 24' includes a network interface 70 (e.g., modem, etc.) permitting two-
4 way communication between the user of system 24' and server 12, via network 16. A
5 user interface 80 is provided to permit communication between the system 24' and a user.
6 For example, user interface 80 can include a remote controlled interface that is displayed
7 in a menu format (using display 84) whereby a user can chose among various options. In
8 addition to, or alternatively, the remote controlled user interface 80 can include an input
9 device (e.g. keyboard, etc.) to permit a user to enter commands to system 24'. The user
10 interface is described more fully below in reference to Figure 8. In essence, a user is
11 permitted to enter one or more commands related to the transmission of one or more
12 desired media files. These commands are temporarily stored on temporary storage 72.
13 Temporary storage 72 can include a combination of RAM memory and permanent
14 memory (e.g., hard disk) for storage of user-generated commands and for temporary
15 storage of the selected media file. Upon entering commands, system 24' initiates
16 communication with server 12, via network 16. It should also be noted that user interface
17 80 preferably also includes commands to permit a financial transaction to occur using
18 financial transaction server 22, which permits a user to enter financial information (e.g.,
19 credit card information, etc.) to purchase the media file. Server 12 begins transmission of
20 the media file, in accordance with the above-described embodiments. The media file is
21 temporarily stored in temporary storage 72.

is decompressed and/or de-encrypted, the file is sent to a copy protection generator 76. Preferably, copy protection generator 76 is a digital signal processing that encodes the media file with analog copy protection. Analog copy protection includes coding that is generated within the data file that inhibits the file from being transferred to another medium, for example, video cassette, by ensuring that any such copy is significantly degraded in quality. Copy protection hardware, such as provided by Macrovision®, include appropriate coding for a given media file type to be displayed in a preselected format (e.g., VGA, HDTV format, NTSC format, etc.). Preferably, copy protection 76 also includes the ability to add time limiting data that limits the viewable lifespan of the media file. Thus, for example, using the time stamp data generated by server, the copy protection generator can incorporate time limiting data, for example, 24 hours, into the media file, after which the media file is erased from the system 24'. Alternatively, copy protection generator 76 can include an automatic erase mechanism that erases the file as it is being viewed.

Once copy protection has been incorporated into the media file, the file is sent through a D/A converter 78 to convert the file into the appropriate output, e.g., HDTV, NTSC, VGA, etc., and is sent to a display 84, via display interface 82. Display 84 can include an analog display that is adapted to play the particular media file (e.g., HDTV, NTSC, PAL, etc.). Display interface 82 includes one or more interface jacks 82A ... 82D for connection to a particular display 84. For example, jacks 82A ... 82D can include an RCA jack, an input jack, a video out jack, etc. In addition, the media file may also

1 include sound data (e.g., soundtrack data). Thus, interface 82 may further include sound
2 output jacks (which may also include appropriate interfaces for Dolby™ Surround Sound
3 connections, as are known in the art).

4 Figure 6 depicts a PC embodiment of the media file playback system 24''. In this
5 embodiment, the media file is transmitted directly to a user's PC and the PC is
6 appropriately adapted for direct viewing of the media file on the computer's monitor or
7 separate display. To that end, system 24'' includes a network interface 70, which
8 includes appropriate hardware/software to permit the user to access the file distribution
9 server 12 via the network 16. As in the previous embodiment, a user enters commands,
10 via user interface 80, to transmit signals to the server to select a desired media file. The
11 media file is transmitted and decompressed and/or de-encrypted 74 and stored on a
12 removable media device 86. Removable media can include an Iomega Jazz disk, memory
13 disk, hard disk, etc., and/or other portable storage devices known in the art. Referring to
14 Figure 6A, removable media includes temporary storage 72 to hold the media file, and is
15 preferably adapted with on-board copy protection 76 (described above). A removable
16 media player 88 is used in conjunction with the specific removable media type to display
17 the media file on a display 84. In the preferred embodiment, the removable media device
18 86 is adapted to be able to interface with a standard VCR player. Thus, removable media
19 device includes appropriate hardware to permit the video information to be fed to the
20 analog head arrangement common to all VCRs. Alternatively, the removable media

device can be played in an appropriately adapted media file playback system 24',
described above.

In the system 24''' depicted in Figure 7, a PC is used to obtain a media file from
the server, and the media file is transmitted to a local display or a remote display using a
remote transmission and reception system. The PC operates as described above with
reference to Figure 6. Upon output of the PC, the media file signals are sent to a
converter 90. The converter 90 converts the media file from the chosen digital download
format (e.g., VGA, etc.) to the appropriate display format, for example NTSC, HDTV,
etc. In one form of this embodiment, the converted signal is sent to a standard wall outlet
transmitter/receiver 92, 94. The transmitter/receiver 92, 94 can be supplied by
VideoCom, Inc. The transmitter 92 is coupled to the internal wiring of the building (e.g.,
copper home and/or office wiring, etc.) which typically operates on 120 VAC at 60 Hz.
The media file signals are modulated and sent to receiver 94, where the signals are
demodulated and displayed on a display 84. Alternatively, the system 24''' can include
and RF transmitter 96 and receiver 98 to transmit the media file signals to a remote
display 84. RF transceivers, as are known in the art, include radio frequency modulation
of the signals to broadcast the signal in a wireless manner. Of course, the modulation
frequency can be chosen for a given environment and/or distance between transmitter 96
and receiver 98. Those skilled in the art will recognize that the PC depicted in Figures 6
and 7 includes all the necessary hardware/software to achieve the stated functionality,

including that hardware/software to achieve communication and interaction with the server to order and transmit media files.

Referring now to Figure 8, the preferred user interface of the present invention is depicted in block diagram form. It should be noted that the functionality associated with the interface modules described below are preferably accomplished through appropriately programmed windowed environments and operating systems (e.g., Unix, Windows, Windows NT, Apple OS, etc.) as may be applied to the embodiments shown in Figures 6 and 7 above. Alternatively, a proprietary menu-driven environment may be used for the embodiment shown in Figure 5. It should also be noted that the interface modules shown in Figure 8 are only exemplary, and any of the stated functionality herein can be accomplished through an appropriately program module. As discussed herein, users are permitted to choose among various functionality when ordering a video file for transmission from the server. For example, certain video files will be stored on the server in a plurality of formats and pixel dimensions (e.g., VGA, letterbox, etc.), resolutions, frame rates, etc. Accordingly, a user may select a particular media file in a desired bit depth 100, language 104, aspect ratio (pixel dimension) 106, media file format 108, or sound feature (e.g., full stereo sound, mono sound, Dolby enhanced sound, etc.). The user may also choose a desired frame rate 118 or artifact filter selection (as may be associated with a certain compression technology) 116. Additionally, the user may select a transmission protocol (e.g., HTTP, FTP, etc.) 110, select a transmission start time 112 and/or a preferred server transmission location 122. Also, as noted above, the user

interface also preferably includes appropriate software to permit users to create templates 120 that are added to a media file.

Figure 10 depicts a flow chart of the preferred server-client data transmission including the preferred de-encryption process of the present invention. It should be noted that the flow chart shown in Figure 10 incorporates the description discussed above with reference to Figures 1-9. In the media file transmission system of the present invention, a user queries the server for a media file 128. If appropriate, the user supplies user-selectable data (i.e., that data associated with the user interface in Figure 8) 130. The server determines the user's parameters 132, i.e., transmission protocol, etc. In addition, the server determines if the user has the appropriate plug-in programs and/or CODECS for a given media file. The user is prompted for payment information, and the server conducts a financial transaction 134. As described above, the preferred system stores files requiring encryption protection in encrypted form on the server systems storage devices 18. This encryption was performed using a unique, random key selected for each event requiring encryption protection. This encryption key is stored in a secure area of the server. The key for the given event is processed to cryptographically split the key into two parts. One part is placed into the play ticket provided to the user. The other part is placed into a validation database located in a secure area of the server. Both the play ticket and the media file are transmitted to the user 140 and stored locally on the user's system. The user attempts to play the media file 142. The play ticket interrupts the access to the media file, and automatically communicates with the server for validation

1 144. If the play ticket is valid, the server sends the second part of the decryption key 146,
2 which when combined with the part from the play ticket results in the decryption key
3 unique to the encryption of the media. Once the decryption key is recovered, both parts
4 of the divided key are purged from the system.. On the user's side, the decryption key is
5 used to decrypt the media file 148. Thus, preferably, the decryption key remains resident
6 in RAM and cannot be written to permanent storage. The user can then view the media
7 file once only. If the user wishes to view the file more than once, process 142-150
8 discussed above repeats. As the play ticket has been used once, a new play ticket must be
9 retrieved from the server. Preferably this new play ticket will not require the user to
10 download the media file to replay, although some media files will be required to be
11 purged from the system as they are playing.

12 Thus, it is evident that there has been provided a media file distribution system
13 having adaptive transmission protocols that satisfies the aims and objectives set forth
14 herein. Accordingly, the present invention is intended to be of broad scope, and only
15 limited by the appended claims.